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Forests

Alleged irregularity on the part of the District Forest Officer in the Mudumalai forest range bribery case.

* 327 *Q*.—Mr. K. A. NACHIYAPPA GOUNDER: Will the Hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether there was a case of bribery some two years back in Mudumalai forest range of the Nilgiri district;

(*b*) how many persons were involved in the case;

(*c*) what the specific charges against each individual concerned are;

(*d*) whether the bribery case was proved and, if so, what action has been taken against the briber and the persons concerned;

(*e*) whether the District Forest Officer delayed the submission of the appeals of the accused in this case, against his orders to the Conservator of Forests; if so, what are the reasons for such delay;

(*f*) whether the memorial submitted to the Government by the accused regarding the unnecessary delay made by the District Forest Officer in submitting the appeals was withheld by the Chief Conservator of Forests, and, if so, on what grounds; and

(*g*) whether the appeals have been finally disposed of, when and in what way?

A.—(*a*) Yes. It was a case rather of extortion.

(*b*) Nine.

(*c*) The specific charges framed and proved against each individual were as follows:—

Serial number and name.	Charges.
1 Ranger, K. P. Benjamin ..	(i) Hushing up a case of shooting in reserved forest.
	(ii) Receiving illegal gratification for hushing up the shooting case.
	(iii) Breach of trust in holding an improper enquiry into a complaint connected with the case and deliberately misleading the District Forest Officer in connexion therewith.
	(iv) Writing a false diary and drawing travelling allowance on a false claim.
	(v) Conspiring with clerks of the District Forest Office and with members of the public to conceal official information from the District Forest Officer and to stay the course of justice.
2 Aruldoss Pillai, forester.	(i) Joining with other subordinates and extracting a bribe from the accused in a forest offence and receiving a portion of the bribe money for his own use.
	(ii) Hushing up the forest offence which should have been reported to the District Forest Officer and illegally returning seizures to the accused.
	(iii) Giving a false statement when the Range Officer enquired into the bribery complaint and writing a false diary for 21st August 1932, the date of the forest offence, with a view to deceive superiors and stay the course of justice.
3 A. Gopal Nayar forest guard	(i) Making false statement with a view to hush up a forest offence and a case of bribery.
	ii) Receiving an illegal gratification for assisting to hush up the case.

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Serial number and name.	Charges.
4 V. Achutha Nayar, forest guard.	(i) Joining with other subordinates in extracting a bribe from the accused in a forest offence which was then hushed up. (ii) Making false statement in a departmental enquiry by the Range Officer, Mudumalai.
5 J. J. Pakianathan, acting Accountant, District Forest Office.	(i) Leaving his jurisdiction without permission. (ii) Divulging official information to the public. (iii) Gross misconduct and breach of trust in discussing with the public and in endeavouring to settle behind the District Forest Officer's back a charge of bribery laid against Government servants which was awaiting orders by the District Forest Officer. (iv) Endeavouring to influence the District Forest Officer's action by preparing an office-note in the case in such a way as to help the person who laid the charge and attending the District Forest Officer's enquiry with the same object.
6 V. Maruthachalam Pillai, typist, District Forest Office.	(i) Leaving the jurisdiction without permission. (ii) Divulging official information to the public. (iii) Gross misconduct and breach of trust in discussing with the public and in endeavouring to settle behind the back of the District Forest Officer a charge of bribery laid against Government servants, which was awaiting orders of the District Forest Officer.
7 Daniel Kodan, clerk, District Forest Office.	(i) Leaving his jurisdiction without permission. (ii) Abetment of concealing bribery case from the head of his office.
8 M. Subramaniam, range clerk, Mudumalai Range.	(i) Joining with other subordinates and extracting a bribe from the accused in a forest offence which was then hushed up and receiving a portion of bribe money for his own use.
9 Thukarama Rao, acting second range clerk, Mudumalai.	(i) Conspiring with other subordinates to hush up a case of illicit shooting. (ii) Receiving a bribe in connexion with the case. (iii) Giving a false statement in a departmental enquiry.

(*d*) Yes. No action was taken against the person from whom the gratification was taken presumably because it was extorted. All the accused were punished according to the gravity of their offences. Seven of them were in the first instance dismissed.

(*e*) Yes, in some cases. The delay was due to pressure of other urgent work and the voluminous records of the case.

(*f*) Yes. The memorial was withheld under Rule XV (2) of the Memorial Rules.

(*g*) Five of the nine accused appealed against the orders of the District Forest Officer. One appeal is pending with the Government. The remaining four appeals have been disposed of, one in October 1934 and three in March 1935. Three appeals were dismissed and in one appeal the order of dismissal was reduced to one of suspension.

Mr. K. A. Nachiyappa Gounder:—" It is stated in the answer that the delay was due to pressure of other work. May I ask, Sir, how long it was delayed? "

The Hon. Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu:—" I cannot say off-hand."

Mr. K. A. Nachiyappa Gounder:—" May I know, Sir, which of the cases have been disposed of and which are the cases that are pending? "

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The Hon. Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu:—"I cannot say off-hand. I shall be very glad to give the information to the hon. Member."

Prisons and Prisoners

Resolution passed by the public of Tinnevelly recommending Mr. Devanayagayya, to be placed in the 'B' class.

* 328 *Q.*—Mr. U. C. Subrahmanya Bhatt: Will the Hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received a copy of a resolution passed by the public of Tinnevelly at a meeting requesting the Government to change the class of Mr. S. A. Devanayagayya, Member, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, now a prisoner in the Trichinopoly Central Jail, from C to B class; if so, on what grounds was the recommendation made; and what the reply of the Government was; and

(*b*) whether it is a fact that he has been keeping ill-health?

A.—(*a*) Yes. It was urged that a change in the class was necessary in the interest of justice and humanity. The Government saw no reason to classify the prisoner in "B" class.

(*b*) The Government have no information.

Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi:—"Will the Government call for information regarding the present state of health of Mr. Devanayagayya?"

The Hon. Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu:—"I have no objection."

Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi:—"Will the Government consider it an act of kindness to see that the classification of this prisoner is changed?"

The Hon. Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu:—"It is not a question of any kindness. It is a question of the observance of the rules."

Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi:—"Kindness in view of the fact that the present state of health of the prisoner is not satisfactory?"

The Hon. Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu:—"If his present state of health is really not satisfactory, that matter will be considered."

Irrigation

Proposals for the improvement of irrigation sources in Malabar and South Kanara.

* 329 *Q.*—Mr. A. B. Shetty: Will the Hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have called for proposals from the Collectors of Malabar and South Kanara for the improvement of irrigation sources in those districts;

(*b*) whether the Government have approved of any minor irrigation schemes in the two districts and, if so, what they are and what the amounts sanctioned for them are;